
Health Scrutiny Committee

11 June 2007

Report of the Head of Civic, Democratic and Legal Services

Work planning for Health Scrutiny 2007/8

Summary

1. This report is to ask members to commence their work planning for the municipal year 2007/8.

Background

2. During the previous municipal year this committee focused much of its attention on the impact of the financial recovery plan being implemented by North Yorkshire and York Primary Care Trust. Members held several meetings with the Financial Director of the PCT to discuss the forecasted financial deficit and the savings measures which were being implemented to reduce it.
3. Members also had ongoing discussions with colleagues from York Hospitals NHS Trust who explained how their contract with the PCT has been reduced by £4m in the current financial year. This will mean that the Hospital's activity has been reduced by 7% in 2007/8.
4. Other concerns of members over the past 12 months have also been the provision of NHS dental services in the York area and the waiting list for NHS podiatry services. They have received regular updates on the numbers of patients assigned to dental practices. At the last meeting in April they also heard from the PCT about new community-based services which offer podiatry and physiotherapy nearer to patients' homes.
5. Since 2005/6 Health Overview and Scrutiny Committees have had the right to comment on health organisations' annual self-assessment declarations (see agenda item 5). This committee will be asked for its next set of commentaries to be produced by April 2008.

6. In January 2007 members agreed that they would like to identify for future scrutiny an area of work based on the remit of the Healthy City Board as part of the Local Strategic partnership.
7. Government funding has been made available of £10,000 for the formation of a regional network of stakeholders in health scrutiny. The supporting Scrutiny Officer, along with other lead officers, took part in the initial discussions regarding this network which expects to build capacity and develop and joint scrutiny working arrangements across the region. It was agreed that a main priority would be health inequalities and how to develop work plans to address these.
8. This network will work closely with a national local government capacity building programme project which covers the whole of the Yorkshire and Humber region and is being hosted by City of Bradford Metropolitan Council. This project is being funded by central government and the Department of Health to the sum of approx £230,000 and commenced in April 2007.
9. The aims of this project is to increase local government understanding of health and wellbeing issues, addressing health inequalities and embedding health into Local Area Agreements. One of the objectives is to develop strategic approaches to health scrutiny and to develop members' understanding of health issues.
10. A regional health scrutiny event is being planned for 19 July 2007 and members of this committee will be invited to participate.
11. Geoff Ainsley of Bradford Metropolitan Council who is co-ordinating this project, has been invited to attend this meeting to talk to members and introduce the project. He will inform members about a work planning process for health scrutiny which is being developed to identify where scrutiny can add value to health and wellbeing and the major issues affecting health trusts in this local authority area.

Consultation

12. The scrutiny officer has been in consultation with Geoff Ainsley of Bradford Metropolitan Council and lead officers of the health scrutiny function in other authorities in the Yorkshire region.

Options

13. Members may decide or not to support the recommendations below aimed at helping establishing a clear work programme and direction for the Committee during the municipal year, and at learning more about the 'health agenda' through regional networking.

Analysis

14. This will enable health scrutiny to develop from being solely an examination of NHS trusts into a wider reaching function that works in partnership with a wide range of organisations to improve the health of the citizens of York.

Corporate Priorities

15. Relevant to Corporate Priority 7 – Improve the health and lifestyles of the people who live in York, in particular among groups whose levels of health are the poorest.

Implications

16. There are no known Financial, HR, Equalities, Legal, Crime and Disorder, IT or other implications at this stage.

Risk Management

17. In compliance with the Councils risk management strategy, there are no known direct risks associated with the recommendations of this report.

Recommendations

18. Members are asked to invite Bill Hodson, Director of Housing and Adult Social Services, to a future meeting to discuss how health scrutiny can contribute to the work of the Health City Board and the local area agreement.
19. Members are asked to agree to attend the Regional Health Scrutiny Event to be held on Thursday 19 July. The venue is as yet unconfirmed, but it is understood that there should be places available for several councillors from each authority.
20. Members are asked to agree to hold a facilitated work planning event in August or early September 2007 to determine the major issues affecting all health partners and the York public and subsequently helping to deliver a prioritised work plan for this Committee for the remainder of the municipal year. **Reason:** In order to carry out their duty to promote the health needs of the

people they represent.

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Report Approved



Date 1.6.07

Specialist Implications Officer(s) *None*

Wards Affected:

All



For further information please contact the author of the report

Annexes

None

Background Papers

None